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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON HONDURAN ELECTIONS: NATIONAL PARTY
CONVENTION

Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (b & d)

11. (U) Five hundred principal delegates and 500 alternates attended the National Party's annual convention on March 14. While unity was the main theme, Mario Canahuati, a losing candidate for the party's presidential nomination, did not attend. The party re-confirmed Lobo as its Presidential candidate, elected 50 new members for its Central Committee, and chose Tegucigalpa mayor Ricardo Alvarez as President of the Party and Rossana Guevara (a popular television journalist who ran as first Presidential Designate on Canahuati,s slate) as Vice President.

12. (U) Guevara mysteriously resigned on March 15. Most party leaders believe that it was due to pressure from Canahuati. Reinaldo Sanchez, the spokesmen of the Party, was picked to take her place. The convention also selected 50 members to serve on the Policy Commission and 45 for the party,s Justice Tribunal. Liberal Party Congressman Juan Orlando Hernandez was re-elected as Secretary General of the Party. The convention created a new district to represent Honduran voters abroad. The delegates in attendance included representatives from Lobo,s, Canahuati,s, and Mario Facusse,s slates. Canahuati said he did not attend as he had not received an invitation, though, according to party members, no member of the party receives a personal invitation.

13. (C) Comment: Canahuati appears to have decided to make a public break from Lobo and the rest of the National Party. He emerged looking immature, as pundits are blaming him for pressuring Guevara to resign an important position and for rejection Lobo's reconciliatory move. (Canahuati denied that he put pressure on Guevara.) Party leaders told us that most of Canahuati's supporters have lined up behind Lobo and that Canahuati is isolated. End Comment.
LLORENS